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## *African Ministerial Conference on the Environment*

### **African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

#### **Seventh special session**

Ministerial meeting

Nairobi, 19 September 2018

## **Report of the ministerial meeting**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The ministerial meeting of the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held at the United Nations Office at Nairobi on 19 September 2018.
2. The meeting was attended by representatives of AMCEN member States, African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies, the secretariats of various environmental conventions, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
3. It was chaired by Ms. Nezha El Ouafi, Secretary of State in charge of sustainable development of Morocco and Vice-President of AMCEN, representing the President of AMCEN, Mr. Jacques Denis Tsanga, Minister for Water and Forestry of Gabon, who also oversaw environmental and sustainable development issues in that country.
4. Ms. Shereen Zobra, Global Head, Science–Policy Interface and Knowledge Networks, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), served as facilitator of the opening ceremony.

### **II. Opening of the meeting**

5. The Chair declared the meeting open at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 19 September 2018.
6. Opening statements were delivered by Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization, speaking via a pre-recorded video message; Ms. Martha Rojas-Urrego, Secretary-General, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat; Ms. Joyce Msuya, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UNEP; Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director, Division of Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission, representing Ms. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture; and Mr. Keriako Tobiko, Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Forestry of Kenya, representing Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya.
7. Additional statements were delivered by Ms. Estherine Fotabong, Director of Programmes, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), representing Mr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD; Mr. Bukar Tijani, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Ms. Astrid Schomaker, Director for Global Sustainable Development, Directorate-General for the Environment, European Commission; Mr. Ado Lõhmus, Deputy Secretary General of the Environment of Estonia and Special Envoy for Mr. Siim Kiisler, Minister of the Environment of Estonia and President of the upcoming fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly; Ms. Cyriaque Nikuze Sendashonga, Global Director, Policy and Programme Group, International Union for Conservation of Nature; and Mr. Fazal Issa, Africa Regional Facilitator for major groups and stakeholders for UNEP, representing civil society.

### **III. Organizational matters**

#### **A. Adoption of the agenda**

8. The representatives adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (AMCEN/SS.VII/1):

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
  - (b) Organization of work.
3. Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group.
4. Briefing on the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference and the outcomes of the Global Landscapes Forum regional conference “Landscape Restoration in Africa: Prospects and Opportunities”.
5. Preparations for the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the African Biodiversity Summit.
6. Preparations for the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
7. Africa’s engagement in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.
8. Consideration and adoption of the draft declaration and draft decisions submitted by the expert group.
9. Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting.
10. Other matters.
11. Closure of the meeting.

#### **B. Organization of work**

9. The representatives agreed to adhere to the programme of work set out in the annotations to the provisional agenda contained in document AMCEN/SS.VII/1/Add.1.

### **IV. Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group**

10. The Chair of the expert group meeting held on 17 and 18 September as part of the seventh special session of AMCEN, Mr. Emmanuel Bayani Ngoyi, Director-General, National Anti-Pollution Centre, Ministry of Water and Forestry in charge of environment and sustainable development (Gabon), reported on the work of that meeting (as summarized in AMCEN/SS.VII/EGM/2).

11. Comments were made by the representatives of Burkina Faso and South Africa.
12. Participants took note of the information provided.

### **V. Briefing on the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference and the outcomes of the Global Landscapes Forum regional conference “Landscape Restoration in Africa: Prospects and Opportunities”**

13. Mr. Kamau Macharia, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kenya, provided information on the upcoming first global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, to be co-hosted in Nairobi from 26 to 28 November 2018 by the Governments of Canada and Kenya.

14. Participants took note of the information provided.

## **VI. Preparations for the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the African Biodiversity Summit**

15. Ms. Yasmine Fouad, Minister for the Environment of Egypt, reported on the preparations under way for the forthcoming Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the African Biodiversity Summit, both of which were to be hosted by her Government in November 2018. She drew attention to a note by the secretariat on “Land and ecosystem degradation and restoration: priorities for increased resilience in Africa” (AMCEN/SS.VII/3).

16. Participants took note of the information provided.

## **VII. Preparations for the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

17. Presentations were made on the preparations for the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by Mr. Artur Lorkowski, Special Envoy on Climate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland; Mr. Mohamed Nasr (Egypt), Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on climate change; and Ms. Kulthoum Omari-Motsumi (Botswana), Coordinator of the African Adaptation Initiative.

18. Comments were made by the representatives of Chad, the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, the Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Tunisia and the African Union Commission, with responses provided by Mr. Nasr.

19. Participants took note of the information provided.

## **VIII. Africa’s engagement in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly**

20. Presentations were made on the preparatory process for the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly by the representative of the secretariat; Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis, Governance Affairs Office, UNEP; and Mr. Hussein Roshdy (Egypt), representing the African Diplomatic Corps in Nairobi.

21. Comments were made by the representative of South Africa.

22. Participants took note of the information provided.

## **IX. Consideration and adoption of the draft declaration and draft decisions submitted by the expert group**

23. Participants considered the draft Nairobi declaration, along with draft decisions and key messages submitted by the expert working group.

24. The Conference adopted the Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges in Africa, as orally amended in the light of comments and suggestions by the representatives of Burkina Faso, also speaking on behalf of Chad and Guinea, Egypt and South Africa. The Declaration is set out in annex I to the present report.

25. The Conference also adopted the following decisions, as orally amended in the light of comments and suggestions by the representatives of Burkina Faso, the Congo, Ethiopia and South Africa: decision SS.VII/1, on biological diversity; decision SS.VII/2, on climate change; and decision SS.VII/3, on Africa’s engagement in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The decisions are set out in annex II to the present report.

## **X. Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting**

26. The Conference entrusted the secretariat with the finalization of the present report.

## **XI. Other matters**

27. No other matters were discussed.

## **XII. Closure of the meeting**

28. Closing remarks were made by Ms. Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, Director, Africa Office, UNEP.
29. Participants observed a minute of silence in memory of the recently deceased Mr. Kofi Annan, former secretary-general of the United Nations.
30. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 5.50 p.m. on Wednesday, 19 September 2018.

## Annex I

### **Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges in Africa**

*We, African ministers for the environment,*

*Having met* in Nairobi on 19 September 2018 at the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

*Recognizing* that achieving long-term sustainable development in Africa will depend on the capacity-building of human capital and sustainable management of our countries' natural capital, which requires investment in and promotion of innovative environmental solutions,

*Acknowledging* the role of innovative solutions for environmental challenges in achieving the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want strategic framework of the African Union and Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Noting* that green business in Africa contributes to increased incomes, job and wealth creation, efficient use of resources, increased productivity and improved health and competitiveness, while bringing social benefits and addressing environmental concerns,

*Concerned* by the high rates of land and ecosystem degradation, and biodiversity loss in Africa,

*Recognizing* the critical importance of biodiversity in supporting economic growth, sustainable development, livelihoods and human well-being in Africa and its contribution to achieving the objectives set out in Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Welcoming* the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa and the 2018 global land degradation assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services,

*Welcoming also* the African Biodiversity Summit, to be held on 13 November 2018 in association with the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 17 to 29 November 2018 under the overarching theme "Investing in biodiversity for people and planet",

*Reaffirming* that the promotion of the circular economy approach to waste management can contribute significantly to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 12 and noting the theme of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, "Towards a pollution-free planet",

*Welcoming further* the outcome of the first Summit of Heads of State and Government on the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, held in Brazzaville on 29 April 2018,

*Welcoming* the progress made in the operationalization of the subregional climate commissions, established at the initiative of His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco at the first Africa Action Summit, held on 16 November 2016 in the margins of the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016,

*Welcoming also* the convening of the inaugural meeting of the Africa Environment Partnership Platform under the theme "50 years of environmental governance and sustainability in Africa" in Nairobi on 21 and 22 September 2018,

*Recalling* the 2008 Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa, through which African countries committed to, among other things, establishing a health-and-environment strategic alliance, as the basis for plans of joint action,

*Taking note* of the 2018 Kigali Agreement, establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, which recognizes the need for environmental protection and sustainable development,

*Welcoming* the 2003 Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, which came into force on 23 July 2016,

*Noting* that women and youth play a critical role as agents of change in empowering families, communities and nations to spur innovative environmental solutions in Africa,

*Aware* of the forthcoming fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held in Nairobi from 11 to 15 March 2019 under the overarching theme “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”,

*Determined* to strengthen our efforts in investing in and prioritizing innovative approaches and actions to unlock inclusive wealth while sustainably managing environment and natural resources,

*Hereby declare our resolve:*

1. To renew and reaffirm our commitment to promoting and investing in innovative environmental solutions to contribute to the reduction of challenges to environmental resources with a view to creating jobs and wealth for the socioeconomic transformation of Africa;
2. To agree to continue to support the Africa Environment Partnership Platform as a vehicle to promote the sharing of innovative solutions to environmental challenges in Africa to empower member States of the Conference, innovators, the private sector, micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises and civil society to invest in and employ innovative approaches to address environmental challenges;
3. To support and promote the continued role of the Conference, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Union Commission and other partners in using the African environment platform as an avenue for creating new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships with stakeholders to share experiences and lessons, improve coordination with member States of the Conference and regional institutions and processes on environmental governance and sustainable development in Africa;
4. To commit ourselves to the integration of innovative solutions into our countries’ national development agendas and create awareness at the local and subnational levels among business and local communities on the positive environmental, health and socioeconomic impact of investing in innovative solutions;
5. To urge African States to invest in and prioritize urgently needed innovative approaches and start the intrinsic implementation of innovative solutions to environmental challenges that unlock inclusive wealth and simultaneously build climate resilience, while supporting the achievement of the multiple targets of the Sustainable Development Goals;
6. To agree to support green business development by formulating policies, legislation, guidelines and programmes to promote sustainable industrialization and safeguard the environment and natural resources;
7. To agree to develop and strengthen gender-responsive policies to empower African women and youth to engage in innovative solutions to access affordable and clean energy and address environmental and sustainable development challenges in order to create jobs and wealth;
8. To agree to take action to strengthen national capacity to collect and manage scientific and quantitative data and information on the state of the environment and natural resources to create smart investment choices and opportunities for innovative solutions to environmental challenges;
9. To call upon civil society and the private sector in Africa to commit, individually and collectively, to promoting and investing in innovative solutions to environmental challenges in order to achieve sustainable development in Africa;
10. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, other United Nations agencies, development partners and the international community to strengthen support for African countries in undertaking studies and assessments and in developing policies, programmes, resource mobilization, projects and measures that contribute to innovative solutions to environmental challenges, by providing adequate, predictable and sustainable means of implementation, including financial support, the development and transfer of appropriate technology and capacity-building, including in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development;
11. To encourage member States of the Conference to actively participate in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held in Nairobi from 11 to 15 March 2019;

12. To mandate the President of the Conference to coordinate the African Group of Negotiators to develop a common understanding and common positions and to speak with one voice during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
13. To urge member States of the Conference to continue deliberations on the issues of greatest importance and common interest to Africa in those negotiations, including the poverty-environment nexus, land degradation, environmental displacement and migration, energy security, food security, green business development, chemicals and waste management and biodiversity loss, with a view to formulating resolutions and concluding a ministerial outcome document during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
14. To mandate the President of the Conference to consult with member States of the Conference on the issue of Africa's representatives to the Bureau of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
15. To reaffirm the request to the African Union Commission to coordinate the African Group of Negotiators to develop common understanding and common positions on various issues and to speak with one voice at the forthcoming Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and at the eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, to be held in Colombo from 23 May to 3 June 2019, and to continue to strengthen such coordination;
16. To agree to develop common understanding and common positions on the development of the post-2020 biodiversity framework and request the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Union Commission, regional economic communities and partners to provide support to African countries in regional consultative engagements for the post-2020 biodiversity framework;
17. To reaffirm Africa's full support to Egypt in convening and hosting the African Biodiversity Summit, to be held on 13 November 2018 in association with the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 17 to 29 November 2018 under the overarching theme "Investing in biodiversity for people and planet";
18. To agree to develop, with the support of partners, a pan-African agenda on ecosystem restoration for increased resilience;
19. To support the proposal calling upon the General Assembly at its seventy-third session to designate the decade 2021–2030 as "the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration";
20. To note with concern the threat that climate change currently poses to development efforts in African countries and the urgent need to tackle the immediate, short and medium-term adaptation challenges facing African countries. We also acknowledge that actions taken to tackle climate change, both of mitigation and adaptation, enhance efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and enhance disaster risk reduction capacity;
21. To urge all parties to continue to fulfil their commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto and to further urge parties to confirm their commitment to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by fulfilling their respective commitments and responsibilities as set out therein, with developed countries taking the lead, both individually and collectively, through providing ambitious, quantified economy-wide absolute emission reductions that are a reflection of their level of development, and the provision of predictable, sustainable means of implementation, in particular financial resources; and, for developing countries, communicating their nationally determined contributions;
22. To stress that the spirit and the aim of the Paris Agreement are to enhance ambition of both action and support, while acknowledging that the level of ambition of developing countries is directly related to the level of ambition and the provision of support provided by developed countries. In that regard, it is crucial that the outcome of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018, should reflect the spirit of the Paris Agreement and the delicate balance between its various elements, in particular those related to action, support and transparency, taking into consideration the fact that adaptation and finance are core elements of the Agreement and cornerstones for the effective operationalization thereof;
23. To also stress the importance of enhancing the accessibility, predictability and sustainability of means of implementation, in particular financing, and we note with concern the

rolling back of pledges by some developed countries, together with the significant decrease in the climate change allocation in the seventh replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility, which may have a negative impact on action to tackle climate change. In that regard, we call on development partners to ensure a meaningful and adequate first replenishment process of the Green Climate Fund that would focus on achieving ambitious results, both in mitigation and resilience-building. Such replenishment should reflect the envisaged progression of provisions of finance beyond the level of the initial resource mobilization;

24. To reaffirm that adaptation is a priority for Africa, and that we expect that the outcome of twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will lead to the operationalization of the global goal on adaptation under paragraph 1 of article 7 of the Paris Agreement, and the enhancement of global action towards supporting the national efforts of African countries to tackle adaptation; and, further, to invite development partners to engage constructively in the donor round table on the Africa Adaptation Initiative to be held on the margins of the General Assembly in New York on 24 September 2018;

25. To welcome the progress made to date in the operationalization of the Africa Adaptation Initiative and Africa Renewable Energy Initiative and to commend the commitment of Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon and Chair of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, in supporting the Africa Adaptation Initiative, and the efforts of Mr. Alpha Conde, President of Guinea and Chair of the board of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, in leading work to operationalize that Initiative;

26. To congratulate Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo, on the successful operationalization of the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, and Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, the President of the Republic of the Niger, for the successful operationalization of the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region;

27. To take note of the Brazzaville Declaration on the Global Peatlands Initiative and call on development partners to provide adequate and predictable support for the effective implementation of the Initiative's goals, objectives and action plan;

28. To recognize the priority of safeguarding food security and eradicating hunger, and acknowledge the vulnerabilities of agriculture and food production systems in Africa to the adverse impact of climate change, stressing the importance of the Koronivia joint work on agriculture making recommendations on resilience-building in agriculture and food production systems;

29. To stress the importance of technology development and transfer as a main enabler for tackling climate change; in which regard we call on developed-country parties to enhance technology transfer of low-emission and climate-resilient technologies to African countries on concessional and preferential terms to assist them to achieve their nationally determined contributions. We further reiterate the importance of enhancing capacity-building for African countries so that they are able to plan and implement climate action at the national level;

30. To reiterate that the measures taken to combat climate change, including unilateral ones, should not lead to unjustifiable discrimination or disguised restrictions on international trade, especially exports from Africa;

31. To note the efforts made to achieve a successful outcome to the Talanoa Dialogue and highlight the importance of ensuring that any outcome to the process should reflect the views of all participants and ensure that it covers all issues related to climate change, in particular mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation;

32. To reiterate the commitment of African countries to take appropriate action, in line with their national circumstances and capacity, and as part of Africa's fair share of global action towards tackling climate change;

33. To agree to enhance the negotiation capacity of African negotiators by promoting and strengthening the existing United Nations Environment Programme environmental diplomacy programme and platforms so as to strengthen African common positions on environment issues;

34. To support the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area as a means of facilitating the protection of the environment and inclusive growth and sustainable development that are necessary to protect human, animal and plant life or health;

35. To encourage member States of the Conference to actively participate in the third Inter-ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa, to be held in Libreville, 9 to

12 October 2018, under the theme “Health and environment strategic alliance: a catalysis for action on the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa”;

36. To reaffirm our support to Kenya in co-hosting with Canada the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, to be held in Nairobi from 26 to 28 November 2018, which will promote innovative blue economy strategies in our countries and contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

37. To urge African states to promote the growth and development of the regional ocean sector in a sustainable blue economy pathway and support the mainstreaming of aquatic biodiversity in all productive sectors with a view to sustainably harnessing the blue economy;

38. To encourage member States of the Conference to actively participate in the first extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, to be held in Khartoum on 25 and 26 February 2019;

39. To request the Bamako Convention secretariat to expedite the development of the new scale of assessed contributions in line with the outcomes of the second Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in January and February 2018;

40. To call upon countries to consider developing and ensuring the implementation of laws on lead paint and to establish the lowest and most protective regulatory limit, as appropriate; especially the 90 parts per million total lead content;

41. To agree to take action and create enabling conditions, including by formulating enabling national policies, introducing innovative technologies, providing adequate investment, promoting regional integration and capacity-building for cleaner mobility;

42. To encourage member States of the Conference that have not yet ratified multilateral environmental agreements, including the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and others to do so and to urge partners to support their implementation;

43. To agree to convene the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources as a step towards the full implementation thereof and call upon member States of the Conference and partners to support the Conference and its related activities;

44. To also agree to continue to support the work of member State missions led by the African diplomatic corps in Nairobi and the Permanent Representatives' Committee in Addis Ababa in their efforts to coordinate African common understanding and positions during negotiations and effective engagement in the African Union, United Nations other regional and global processes on sustainable development;

45. To urge member States of the Conference to pay their contributions to the general trust fund of the Conference, including outstanding arrears, in a timely manner;

46. To mandate the President of the Conference to convey to all stakeholders the priorities and position of Africa as set out in the present declaration, decisions, key messages and report of the seventh special session, including to external partners and organizations, with a view to enlisting their support, and to report to the Conference thereon at its next regular session;

47. To also mandate the President of the Conference to submit the report of the seventh special session, including the recommendations contained in the present declaration and the decisions adopted by the Conference, to the African Union Commission for further action by the policy organs of the African Union;

48. To express our gratitude to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for hosting the secretariat of the Conference, for the support that it continues to provide to the Conference and that it has provided to the present special session in particular;

49. To also express our profound appreciation to the Chair of the African Union Commission, the President of the African Development Bank, the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Global Environment Facility and the Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, among others, for the continued support of their organizations for the work of the Conference;

**Special tribute to Dr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations**

50. To extend our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, Government and people of Ghana, and the international community on the passing of Dr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to express our appreciation for the role that he played in advancing the sustainable development agenda and advocating for the interests of Africa.

## Annex II

### Decisions adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its seventh special session

#### A. Decision SS.VII/1: Biological diversity

*We, African ministers for the environment,*

*Having met* in Nairobi on 19 September 2018 at the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

*Recalling* part V of decision 16/25 of the Conference, in which it endorsed and supported the proposal of Egypt to host a high-level event on African biodiversity on 13 November 2018 in association with the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 17 to 29 November 2018 under the overarching theme “Investing in biodiversity for people and planet”,

*Recalling also* decision 14/8 on the management of biodiversity in Africa, which, among other things, established a coordination mechanism for the African Group of Negotiators on biodiversity and requested the African Union Commission to support the work of the African Group of Negotiators on biodiversity, including hosting coordination meetings and capacity-building,

*Recalling further* resolution 2/10 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, which highlighted the contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme “to marine ecosystem restoration activities, and in particular to ecosystem management and restoration in coastal regions, nature-based solutions to climate adaptation and the creation of sustainable jobs and livelihoods in coastal regions”,

*Welcoming* the reports and key messages from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services global land degradation assessment and its regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa,

*Recognizing* that Africa’s extraordinary richness in biodiversity and ecosystem services and the continent’s wealth of indigenous and local knowledge comprise a strategic asset for sustainable development in the region,

*Recognizing also* the urgent need to combat land degradation and restore ecosystems in Africa to, among other things, promote economic growth, help to reduce poverty, increase food production, protect biodiversity and contribute to the mitigation of and increased resilience to climate change,

*Welcoming* the commitments already made by African countries to land and ecosystem restoration within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (including Aichi Biodiversity targets 5, 14 and 15), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement thereunder, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (including on land degradation neutrality targets), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, as appropriate, and Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (particularly Sustainable Development Goal 15), and encouraging member States of the Conference to be parties to those agreements,

*Recalling* decision XIII/5 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, by which the Parties adopted a short-term action plan on ecosystem restoration,

*Welcoming* the commitments already made by African countries to land and ecosystem restoration within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (including Aichi Biodiversity targets 5, 14 and 15), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (including on land degradation neutrality targets), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (particularly Sustainable Development Goal 15),

*Welcoming also* in particular the commitments and progress made by some countries under the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative, which seeks to restore 100 million hectares of degraded and deforested land in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030, and the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative,

*Recalling* decision XIII/23 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, by which the Parties adopted a short-term action plan to enhance and support capacity-building for the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto, and requested and invited implementation of the activities of the plan, including through support for mainstreaming biodiversity into development processes, poverty eradication and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Aware* that the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 17 to 29 November 2018 under the overarching theme “Investing in biodiversity for people and planet”, and welcoming the progress made in the preparation thereof,

*Welcoming* the progress made in the preparations for the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 17 to 29 November 2018, including a consultative meeting held with African focal points to the Convention in Montreal, Canada, on 1 July 2018,

*Decide:*

1. To reaffirm the request to the African Union Commission, contained in decision 14/8 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, to coordinate the African Group of Negotiators to develop common understanding and positions on various priority issues and speak with one voice during the United Nations biodiversity conferences and, in particular, the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity;
2. To urge member States of the Conference to identify and submit to the African Union Commission the biodiversity issues of priority to Africa over the coming decade, with a view to formulating them into draft resolutions to be presented at the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the preparations for the post-2020 biodiversity framework;
3. To take note of and support the elements of the Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges in Africa, the pan-African action agenda on ecosystem restoration for increased resilience, and Africa’s biodiversity priorities;
4. To invite the Government of Egypt, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and with support from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme, to further develop the Declaration, the draft pan-African action agenda on ecosystem restoration for increased resilience, and Africa’s biodiversity priorities and make them available for consideration at the African Biodiversity Summit in November 2018;
5. To request the New Partnership for Africa's Development planning and coordinating agency, African Union Commission, regional economic communities and partners to provide support to African countries in the regional consultative engagements for the post-2020 Biodiversity framework;
6. To also request the United Nations Environment Programme, other United Nations agencies, development partners and the international community to facilitate the strengthening of capacity of African countries to combat land degradation and enhance ecosystem restoration in Africa, and to facilitate the strengthening of mainstreaming initiatives to address the sectoral drivers of land degradation and biodiversity loss;
7. To recommend that member States of the Conference address the three Rio Conventions in a coherent manner by considering the state of biodiversity and ecosystem services, land and ecosystem degradation, and issues of climate change synergistically in order to better understand and enhance the contribution of nature to socioeconomic development and human well-being;
8. To urge member States of the Conference to enhance the implementation of decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity relating to ecosystem restoration, as well as their national commitments towards achieving Aichi Biodiversity targets 5, 14 and 15;
9. To also urge member States of the Conference to enhance implementation of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Protocols thereto, as appropriate, particularly those relating to the mainstreaming of biodiversity, the

conservation of freshwater and coastal and marine biodiversity, and access and benefit-sharing, as well as other national commitments towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and to encourage member States to become parties to the above-mentioned Protocols;

10. To encourage member States of the Conference to implement a landscape approach to conservation which provides for integrated, holistic, transparent, inclusive and participatory development planning processes of land and natural resources at the local and landscape levels and provides for sustainable development in Africa;

11. To invite the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the African Union Commission, in close collaboration with regional economic communities and with the support of relevant financial and technical partners, to continue to assist African countries to implement, in a coordinated and coherent manner, their restoration commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as future commitments to be made within the context of the forthcoming African Biodiversity Summit, including through initiatives such as the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative and the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, and to explore opportunities to scale up those initiatives and related commitments;

12. To recommend that member States of the Conference mobilize partnerships and resources to support implementation of the outcomes of the African Biodiversity Summit, including the pan-African action agenda on ecosystem restoration for increased resilience, through bilateral, regional and global funding platforms such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol, and the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund;

13. To encourage African Governments to build capacity to analyse trends and practices, and to develop models and scenarios in order to project the future impact of key drivers such as climate change and other anthropogenic drivers, such as physical infrastructure, on biodiversity, ecological capital and the contribution of nature to human well-being, and to build capacity through mainstreaming to use such analyses to address the sectoral drivers of land degradation and biodiversity loss;

14. To support ecosystem restoration in the region, linking it with implementation of the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want strategic framework of the African Union, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the post-2020 biodiversity framework, the Convention on Biological Diversity's short-term action plan on ecosystem restoration, and with the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, land-degradation-neutral plans, national adaptation plans and nationally determined contributions;

15. To encourage member States of the Conference to identify opportunities to fully realize the value of biodiversity and explore ways of using it sustainably to contribute to economic and technological development in a fair and equitable manner;

16. To support the proposal of Egypt to launch a global initiative to promote the use of nature-based ecosystem approaches to coherently address biodiversity loss, climate change and land and ecosystem degradation;

17. To welcome and support the proposal of El Salvador and countries of the Central American Integration System, calling upon the United Nations General Assembly at its seventy-third session to designate 2021–2030 as the “United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration” and call upon African member States to undertake concrete actions at both the national and regional levels during the decade.

## **B. Decision SS.VII/2: Climate change**

*We, African ministers of the environment,*

*Having met* in Nairobi on 19 September 2018 at the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

*Expressing* appreciation to Gabon for its achievements as President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in providing political direction and maintaining the unity of Africa in pursuit of its interests in climate change negotiations and in the operationalization and implementation of the Africa Adaptation Initiative,

*Expressing also* appreciation to Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon and Chair of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, for his personal

commitment to support Africa's priorities in various arenas and for his support for the Africa Adaptation Initiative,

*Expressing further* appreciation to Mr. Alpha Conde, President of Guinea, for his commitment to operationalize the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative as Chair of the Board of the Initiative,

*Welcoming* the outcome of the first Summit of Heads of State and Government on the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, held in Brazzaville on 29 April 2018,

*Welcoming also* the progress made in the operationalization of the climate commissions established on the margins of the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 16 November 2016 and at the initiative of King Mohammed VI of Morocco,

*Recognizing* that Africa faces numerous, severe and growing impacts from climate change and that these impacts are undermining the continent's efforts to attain its development goals, particularly in view of the fact that they are predicted to gravely affect numerous economic sectors and livelihoods, with both direct and indirect impacts on African countries' growth and development,

*Reiterating* that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol thereto and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change constitute the global legal framework on climate change and that all actions or measures related to climate change must therefore be in full conformity with the principles and provisions set out in those agreements, in particular, the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in the light of national circumstances,

*Reiterating also* our commitment to the multilateral approach of addressing the global challenge of climate change through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, reaffirming our commitment to implement the Kyoto Protocol thereto and the Paris Agreement in the best interests of African countries, which are particularly vulnerable to climate change and already adversely affected by the impact thereof, while ensuring African countries the policy space needed to achieve sustainable development,

*Welcoming* with appreciation the work of the African Group of Negotiators and encouraging the Group to continue to represent the interests of Africa in climate change negotiations and advance global governance on climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

*Cognizant* of the forthcoming twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, and the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, to be held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018, and reaffirming the support of African countries to the incoming presidency of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, the Government of Poland, in its efforts to advance the work programme of the Paris Agreement in a balanced, fair and inclusive manner,

*Decide:*

1. To urge parties to the Paris Agreement to recognize the special circumstances and needs of African countries, in line with decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties, and call upon the incoming presidency of the Conference of the Parties to continue with consultations, with a view to reaching a decision in that regard before the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
2. To also urge developed countries to enhance their efforts in the pre-2020 period to close the ambition gap with regard to mitigation, adaptation and finance, and call on all countries to accelerate full implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol thereto and all relevant decisions, in accordance with their obligations under the Convention;
3. To call upon all parties to work constructively to deliver the mandate of the programme of work of the Paris Agreement, including the mandated work of its subsidiary bodies, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement and the constituted bodies, to provide operational guidance on all the provisions of the Paris Agreement to ensure its effective implementation from 2020;

4. To stress the importance of maintaining a balance between the outcomes of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties and the further work to be undertaken between the session and 2020; of providing operational guidance on the provisions of the Paris Agreement; and a recognition of the need for further clarity on the means of implementation, including the post-2020 financial arrangements, as a cornerstone to ensure a balanced outcome at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties;

5. To commend the work done by the African representatives in the constituted bodies under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including on the board of the Adaptation Fund. We also commend the efforts of the Green Climate Fund African Board members to ensure that African priorities are well instituted in the policies of the Boards, and further request African Board members to continue to ensure that the Adaptation Fund functions well, delivers results, affords the provisions that are needed to assist African countries in their climate adaptation and mitigation action, and highlights Africa's commitment to have its highest calibre representatives serving on the Board;

6. To stress the importance of the Green Climate Fund conducting a successful first replenishment process to permit the Fund to implement its mandate as an operating entity of the financial mechanism under article 11 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and under its Governing Instrument to channel new, additional, adequate and predictable financial resources, catalyse climate finance (both public and private) for developing countries and promote a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development;

7. To request the African Board members of the Green Climate Fund to consider the inclusion of guidance for the first replenishment process that would allow for raising adequate resources and assist in achieving ambitious results for the first replenishment period, including through facilitated access to Green Climate Fund resources, highlighting that such resources should be at a level that reflects the goals and objectives of the Fund and in accordance with the needs of developing countries as outlined in the Governing Instrument;

8. To urge parties to the Paris Agreement to expedite the operationalization of the global goal on adaptation as set out in the Agreement, in a manner that takes into account the needs, associated costs and support required by African countries for the implementation of adaptation action, with a view to enhancing Africa's adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability, to ensure an adequate response to climate change;

9. To call for a balanced participation of stakeholders from developing and developed countries in the Talanoa Dialogue, with the expectation that the outcome will reflect a balance of the views expressed during the Dialogue and will cover all aspects of climate change, including those related to adaptation and the means of implementation;

10. To also call for enhanced mitigation ambitions in line with article 2 of the Paris Agreement, recognizing that enhanced and predictable financial and technical support for African countries will allow for greater ambition in their actions, while highlighting the fact that achieving development and the eradication of poverty are the overriding priorities for Africa;

11. To recognize the importance of constructing a balanced and comprehensive transparency framework for both action and support to facilitate clarity and build trust, taking into account the existing transparency arrangements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the flexibility provided for developing countries under the Paris Agreement;

12. To welcome the progress achieved to date in the operationalization of African initiatives to tackle climate change, in particular the Africa Adaptation Initiative and the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, and request development partners to consider enhancing their support to all those initiatives to ensure the fulfilment of their goals and mandates as part of supporting nationally determined actions and priorities;

13. To invite Mr Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon, to continue to provide leadership to ensure the successful and accelerated implementation of the African Adaptation Initiative and to extend the function of the technical working group to that of a steering committee by recalling AMCEN decision 16/4 on climate change and, with a view to ensuring African ownership of the process, to request the African Group of Negotiators to develop the terms of reference of the steering committee for consideration and adoption at the first meeting of the steering committee;

14. To congratulate Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo, for the successful operationalization of the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, and Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Niger, for the successful operationalization of the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region;
15. To take note of the Brazzaville Declaration on the Global Peatlands Initiative and to call on development partners to provide adequate and predictable support for the effective implementation of the Initiative's goals, objectives and action plan;
16. To request the African Group of Negotiators to continue to support the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, as appropriate, and assist African countries in the rapid implementation of their nationally determined contributions with regard to sustainable energy;
17. To endorse the key messages on climate change negotiations set out in the annex to the present decision, welcome the document "Guiding elements of the African common position" and request the African Group of Negotiators to regularly update the African Common Position on Climate Change as a platform for articulating the interests of **African** countries;
18. To express appreciation for the support provided to African countries and the African Group of Negotiators by the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Government of Germany, among other development partners.

## Appendix to decision SS.VII/2

### Key messages on climate change negotiations

*Submitted by the African ministers of the environment, having met in Nairobi on 19 September 2018 at the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, to the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, to be held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018*

#### Pre-2020 action

1. While we welcome the current increasing participation of developing countries, especially African countries, in tackling climate change as a reflection of Africa's commitment to doing its fair share in the global effort, we note that such ambitious transition is not matched by similar commitment to increased ambition by our partners in developed countries; in this regard we highlight with concern the inadequate pre-2020 mitigation ambition and the financing gap.

2. We note with concern the threat that climate change poses to development in Africa and the urgent need to tackle the immediate, short and medium-term adaptation challenges facing African countries, acknowledging that action towards tackling climate change will enhance efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and increase disaster risk reduction capacity.

3. We urge all parties to continue to fulfil their commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto. We welcome the coming into force of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol and call on parties that have not yet ratified the Doha Amendment that establishes the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol to do so.

4. We call upon our partners, the developed countries, to show their commitment to and leadership in climate action by enhancing ambition in the pre-2020 period. We urge developed countries to close the gap in financial support needed from public sources in the pre-2020 period, including through accelerating actions to fulfil the goal of mobilizing at least US\$ 100 billion annually by 2020 as part of their commitment to enhancing the predictability, sustainability and adequacy of the provision of finance, technology and capacity-building support to African countries, while significantly increasing adaptation finance to address the immediate needs of those African countries that are vulnerable to climate change, highlighting the historical responsibility of developed countries for the current impact of climate change.

5. We welcome the Talanoa Dialogue, which takes stock of the collective efforts of countries in relation to progress towards the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including efforts with regard to mitigation actions, adaptation actions and means of implementation, to inform enhanced pre-2020 actions by countries, in particular developed countries, and emphasizes that enhanced pre-2020 ambition can lay a solid foundation for enhanced post-2020 ambition.

6. We stress the important role of the operating entities of the financial mechanisms of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund in supporting actions by developing countries to address climate change, and the importance of the current and future replenishment processes of the operating entities to take into account the needs and associated costs of African countries, in particular the replenishment process of the Green Climate Fund.

#### Paris Agreement

7. We reaffirm our commitment to the multilateral approach to addressing the global challenge of climate change, with the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol thereto and the Paris Agreement at its centre, guiding countries' participation to ensure an effective and appropriate international response to climate change, as the implementation of the Paris Agreement will enhance both the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the multilateral rules-based regime in an ambitious but balanced manner.

8. We stress that the implementation of the Paris Agreement should be in accordance with the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as reflected in the Paris Agreement, and in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities; it is important that such principles be reflected in the decision to operationalize the Paris Agreement. We further stress that the delicate

balance of the provisions of the Paris Agreement should be respected, in particular with respect to the linkage between actions by developing countries and the support provided by developed countries.

9. We expect that the forthcoming twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will deliver a balanced, coherent and comparable outcome that will include all the elements of the work programme of the Paris Agreement that are needed to enhance global action to tackle climate change, with regard to both adaptation and mitigation, and with the necessary means of implementation, in particular finance, that is predictable, sustainable and adequate so that African countries are able to fulfil the objectives of the Paris Agreement and to enhance ambition, both of action and of the support needed therefor, recognizing that adaptation and the provision of support are two of the cornerstones required for African action.

10. We reaffirm that adaptation and resilience-building for sustainable development are the overriding priorities for Africa, and that both ex ante and ex post communication and information on adaptation actions are primary elements of the enhanced climate change regime envisaged by the Paris Agreement. In that regard, we call for the operationalization of the global goal on adaptation, including through the formulation of indicators to guide the response to climate change at all levels, the establishing of information on the support needed to implement adaptation actions, and adaptation communications as part of the nationally determined contributions, all of which are crucial for the operationalization of the adaptation component of the Paris Agreement.

11. We urge developed countries to provide full support, in the form of grants, to developing countries for the formulation, updating and implementation of national adaptation plans and adaptation communications that are provided through different channels, including as a component of nationally determined contributions. Such support should also include support for assessments of developing countries' needs and associated costs, including the planning and implementation of adaptation actions.

12. We are concerned by the increasing number of devastating events associated with the adverse effects of climate change on the African continent, both in relation to extreme weather events and slow onset events. We stress the importance of addressing and limiting loss and damage associated with the impact of climate change in affected countries and communities in a comprehensive manner as an important component of the global approach to climate change. Accordingly, we call for the mechanisms, frameworks and support, in terms of finance, technology and capacity-building, of the Warsaw International Mechanism to be enhanced, with a view to achieving its mandate and fulfilling its functions.

13. We expect that the implementation of the Paris Agreement will lead to an increase in mitigation ambition in line with the spirit and articles of the Agreement and the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In that regard, we stress that enhanced support for African countries will allow for higher ambition of their actions and the unlocking of their potential, recognizing that development needs and poverty eradication are the overriding priorities for Africa, and that action to tackle climate change could complement and catalyse action to achieve sustainable development.

14. We call on developed countries to continue to take the lead by enhancing their quantified economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets and actions that represent continuous progression and reflect the highest possible ambition.

15. We stress the commitment of African countries to take appropriate action, in line with their national circumstances and capacity, and as part of Africa's fair share of the global action towards tackling climate change.

16. We call for increased mitigation ambition, in line with the Paris Agreement and in accordance with the provisions and principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and for enhanced support for African countries that will allow for higher ambition in their actions, recognizing that achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication are overriding priorities for Africa.

17. We urge developed countries, as part of taking the lead in tackling climate change both individually and collectively, to increase the provision of support to African countries, and to mobilize adequate, predictable and sustainable means of implementation, in particular financial, over and above previous efforts, in response to the needs of African countries.

18. We stress the importance of ensuring predictability and transparency of climate finance through ex ante indicative, quantitative and qualitative information to be provided by developed

countries, including projected levels of climate finance from public sources on an individual basis, highlighting the fact that enhancing the ambition of climate action by African countries depends on a similar ambition of climate action and predictable support to be provided by developed countries, both individually and collectively.

19. We stress the need to reach a decision at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to initiate negotiations to set a new quantified financial goal by developed countries from a base of US\$ 100 billion per year prior to 2025 and preferably by 2023, taking into account the lengthy and complicated access disbursement rules and procedures.

20. We urge the finalization of the arrangements for the Adaptation Fund to also serve the Paris Agreement, including its governance and institutional arrangements, safeguards and operating modalities, at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, while ensuring the continuity of the current balance in the Adaptation Fund board membership, and note that the share of proceeds under article 6 of the Paris Agreement constitutes an important resource for the Fund, in addition to voluntary contributions.

21. We recognize the importance of technology development and transfer for the implementation of climate action and the role of the technology framework established under the Paris Agreement. We urge its elaboration to include the updating of technology needs assessments, the provision of support for the implementation of the outcomes of technology needs assessments, the assessment of technologies that are ready for transfer and the enhancement of enabling environments in developed countries as a means of addressing barriers and meeting the specific needs and concerns of African countries; we also highlight the fact that technology transfer to African countries on concessional and preferential terms is crucial for enhancing action, both in mitigation and adaptation.

22. We underline the importance of the early and full implementation of article 11 of the Paris Agreement, noting the need for capacity-building for African countries to deliver on their obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. We also stress the importance of financial support for capacity-building to enable African countries to address the impact of climate change, including the development of adaptation plans. In that regard, we call for the support provided to be enhanced and for the process of accessing such support through the Global Environment Facility to be facilitated, with resources set aside, in the form of grants, for fulfilling obligations related to reporting and the preparation of nationally determined contributions, and for grant support to be provided through the Green Climate Fund for the preparation of national adaptation plans.

23. We stress that the operationalization of the transparency framework of the Paris Agreement should lead to a balanced outcome between the transparency of action and support, with equal attention afforded to the two in both the negotiations and the envisaged outcomes. We emphasize that the development of modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework of action should be based on the flexibility provided for developing countries, including those related to different types of commitment and the varying capacity of parties, with the envisaged outcome to be in line with, and building on, existing transparency arrangements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

24. We stress the importance of the transparency of support as a crucial element of the transparency regime, as it is a cornerstone for building trust and enabling action, by providing clarity of information and tracking the progression of financial support provided to developing countries.

25. We call for a comprehensive scope of the global stocktake in our efforts to assess progress towards achieving the temperature goal, taking into consideration all aspects of the Paris Agreement, including mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, means of implementation and support. We reaffirm that the consideration of collective progress should be on the basis of equity and latest available science.

26. We urge all parties to design a comprehensive compliance mechanism covering all the provisions of the Paris Agreement in order to facilitate implementation for developing countries and promote compliance by developed countries, through the design of effective modalities and procedures based on the differentiated obligations between developed and developing countries and taking into account national circumstances, and we emphasize the centrality of the fulfilment of financial obligations by individual developed-country parties in the design of a comprehensive compliance mechanism.

27. We call for equal treatment with regard to cooperative approaches and the mechanism for mitigation and sustainable development under article 6 of the Paris Agreement in terms of raising ambition in mitigation and adaptation actions and to help to meet the cost of adaptation for developing

countries. We emphasize the need for both market-based and non-market-based approaches to ensure environmental integrity, avoid duplication and double counting, and support fair regional distribution and inclusiveness.

28. We welcome the decision by the Board of the Green Climate Fund to operationalize results-based financing for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (the REDD-plus climate change mitigation solution developed by parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), and we urge the Board of the Green Climate Fund to include provisions to incentivize non-carbon benefits associated with the implementation of REDD-plus, taking into consideration the circumstances of African countries.

29. We call upon development partners to provide support for Africa to facilitate a “just transition” to secure decent jobs and livelihoods for workers who have been affected by climate change and to support a shift to thriving economies that provide dignified, productive and ecologically sustainable livelihoods.

30. We recognize the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the vulnerabilities of agriculture and food production systems in Africa to the adverse impact of climate change. We emphasize the importance for African countries that the Koronivia joint work on agriculture provide recommendations on building the resilience of agricultural and food production systems, and sustainable and predictable access to adequate means of implementation, in particular technology transfer on preferential and concessional terms and financing that is predictable and adequate.

31. We commend the work done under the African Adaptation Initiative, including in relation to preparing the report on the state of adaptation in Africa, and in that regard we commend the leadership shown by Gabon in supporting the operationalization of the Initiative.

32. We also commend the Board of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative for finalizing the establishment phase of the Initiative with the successful adoption of its Governing Instrument and the recruitment of a permanent director for its Independent Delivery Unit; and we request the African Group of Negotiators to continue to support the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, as appropriate, and assist African countries in the rapid implementation of their nationally determined contributions with regard to sustainable energy.

33. We emphasize that measures taken to combat climate change, including unilateral measures, should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade, in particular African exports. We express concern about the shifting of responsibility to developing countries through a focus on economic diversification and just transition of jobs, which should not only include, but focus on an understanding of the impact on developing countries of policies adopted by developed countries.

34. We also emphasize the importance of considering under the negotiations, as appropriate, under the negotiations, issues related to biodiversity, oceans and coastal ecosystems as effective mechanisms for tackling climate action.

35. We reaffirm our support for the promotion of gender equality and responsiveness in developing and implementing climate policies. We also encourage the enhancement of the participation of women in the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of their representation in bodies established pursuant to the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol thereto and the Paris Agreement.

36. We further highlight the importance of ensuring strengthened participation of youth, as appropriate, in the design and implementation of climate actions, and emphasize the importance of the views of youth.

37. We emphasize the importance of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform in engaging diverse knowledge, best practice, experience and perspectives to inform climate-related decisions and actions at the national and international levels.

38. We encourage the participation, as appropriate, of stakeholder representatives, including from the private sector and non-governmental organizations, in processes related to the formulation and implementation of climate action, including negotiations, stressing the importance of ensuring equal participation of stakeholders from developed and developing countries in processes related to negotiations.

## C. **Decision SS.VII/3: Africa’s engagement in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme**

*We, African ministers for the environment,*

*Having met* in Nairobi on 19 September 2018 at the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

*Recalling* the outcomes of the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held on 15 and 16 June 2017 in Libreville under the theme “Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa”,

*Recalling also* decision 16/3 of the Conference on Africa’s engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme,

*Recalling further* the outcomes of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 June 2014 under the overarching theme “Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda, including sustainable consumption and production”,

*Recalling* the outcomes of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 May 2016 under the overarching theme “Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

*Welcoming* the outcomes of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi from 4 to 6 December 2017 under the overarching theme “Towards a pollution-free planet”,

*Recalling* resolution 3/11 of the United Nations Environment Assembly on implementation of paragraph 88 (a)–(h) of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The Future we Want”,

*Recalling also* resolution 3/5 of the United Nations Environment Assembly on investing in innovative environmental solutions for accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Reaffirming* the need to create an enabling environment to pursue innovative solutions to environmental challenges in the context of sustainable development and in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity, including through adequate and predictable means of implementation as agreed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, adopted in 2015,

*Aware* that the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly will be held in Nairobi from 11 to 15 March 2019 under the overarching theme “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”,

*Aware also* that African countries are increasingly faced with mounting socioeconomic challenges, such as poverty, food insecurity, energy insecurity, unemployment of women and youth, environmental displacement and migration, and increasing socioeconomic inequality, all of which threaten the attainment of the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want strategic framework of the African Union and the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Stressing* that there are numerous environmental challenges that have an impact on society and the economy, including poverty, climate change, food insecurity, environmental degradation, environmental displacement and migration, energy insecurity, loss of biodiversity, pollution, land mismanagement, desertification and sand storms,

*Emphasizing* the nexus between poverty and environment and the fact that poverty is not only the greatest global challenge, but also an indispensable requirement for the implementation of Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Convinced* that innovative solutions to environmental challenges should be considered as instruments for transforming policies into tangible implementation actions with multiple benefits, including, but not limited to, the capability of unlocking inclusive wealth creation,

*Bearing in mind* that innovations and systemic changes towards sustainability at various stages of the life cycle will achieve sustainable consumption and production and address environmental challenges directly,

*Stressing* that the conservation of the environment, and ecosystem services and their functions, as well as the sustainable use of natural resources, should be ensured in the promotion of innovative solutions,

*Noting* that investing in and promoting innovative solutions to environmental challenges in such areas as clean energy, the circular economy, ecosystem-based approaches to agriculture and sustainable industrialization can contribute to eradicating poverty, reducing pollution, enhancing the capacity of ecosystems, addressing environmental displacement and migration, improving food security, accelerating socioeconomic transformation and creating sustainable employment and economic growth,

*Emphasizing* that capacity-building, awareness creation, development and transfer of appropriate technology and resource mobilization are important elements in enhancing and strengthening national capacity to develop innovative solutions to environment challenges at all levels,

*Aware* that the promotion and use of traditional knowledge and the exchange of knowledge and good practices are essential in developing and enhancing innovative solutions to environmental challenges,

*Recognizing* the role played by South-South cooperation in developing and advancing innovative solutions to address environmental challenges as a compliment to, and not a substitute for, North-South cooperation,

*Recalling* decision 16/3 of the Conference on, among other matters, delayed and selective implementation of previous United Nations Environment Assembly and Governing Council decisions and resolutions, and the lack of a monitoring mechanism by which Member States can track and assess the status of implementation of previous and future resolutions,

*Appreciating* the work being done by the African Diplomatic Corps and its technical committee in Nairobi in negotiations during the intersessional period and during the sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly, based on the political guidance provided by the Conference, and acknowledging the centrality of the Conference in formulating common African positions on all matters related to the environment,

*Stressing* the importance of communicating through conventional diplomatic channels, including through the permanent missions accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme, on matters related to the Conference,

*Decide:*

1. To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and its Bureau to coordinate the African Group of Negotiators to develop common understanding and common positions and to speak with one voice during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
2. To agree that the President of the Conference, in collaboration with the permanent representatives based in Addis Ababa, Geneva, Nairobi and New York, shall continue to coordinate the work of the African Group of Negotiators to ensure an effective and coordinated approach during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
3. To strongly encourage member States of the Conference to actively participate and remain engaged at all levels in the deliberations and negotiations before and during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
4. To request the African Group of Negotiators to continue discussions and deliberations on innovative solutions to the environmental challenges of greatest importance and common interest to Africa with a view to formulating such solutions into both draft resolutions and the draft outcome document to be negotiated during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
5. To also request the African Group of Negotiators to include issues of common interest to Africa in those negotiations, including the poverty-environment nexus, land degradation, environmental displacement and migration, energy security, food security, green business development, waste management and biodiversity loss, among other issues;
6. To reaffirm the importance of concluding the work of the high-level segment of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly with an outcome document in the form of

a political declaration negotiated by member States of the Conference and adopted by consensus, which should be concise, focusing primarily on the theme of the session, and be based on the Rio principles of environment and development, as well as the need to support African countries in effectively implementing the outcomes of the session in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

7. To stress that the outcomes of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly should include provisions for technical capacity-building and development, financial support and innovative partnerships to enhance the efforts of African countries to formulate and implement policies, legislation and programmes that promote innovative solutions addressing environmental challenges;

8. To request the United Nations Environment Programme to continue the established practice of financing the participation of representatives from developing countries, particularly from Africa, in the sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly in order to maintain the openness, transparency and inclusiveness of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Environment Assembly;

9. To stress that engagement with stakeholders in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly should be inclusive and geographically balanced, with the overarching goal of involving African stakeholders in the process;

10. To underline the importance of finalizing the stakeholders' engagement policy of the United Nations Environment Programme and to reaffirm that, until the adoption of the policy, African countries are committed to the inclusive and meaningful participation of all accredited relevant stakeholders in the United Nations Environment Assembly and its preparatory processes, while maintaining the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Environment Assembly;

11. To acknowledge the important role and nature of the African private sector and public-private partnerships in addressing environmental challenges on the continent and that the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in his strategy to engage the private sector, should also involve Africa's private sector and public-private partnership;

12. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to expedite the implementation of all previous United Nations Environment Assembly and Governing Council declarations, decisions and resolutions in a balanced manner, especially those of priority to the African continent;

13. To also request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to develop, as soon as possible, and in consultation with member States of the Conference, a monitoring mechanism by which they can track and assess the status of implementation of previous and future resolutions and declarations;

14. To further request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to expedite the full implementation of the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/11, entitled "Implementation of paragraph 88 (a)–(h) of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The Future we Want";

15. To encourage member States of the Conference that have not done so to establish resident diplomatic representation to the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in Nairobi, given the critical role and importance of those two United Nations bodies as multilateral centres for the engagement of Africa in discussions on the global sustainable development agenda;

16. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to strengthen the strategic regional presence of the United Nations Environment Programme in Africa so as to support member States of the Conference and ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner, and to enhance the capacity of the United Nations Environment Programme to support the implementation of programmes and projects at the national and subregional levels through the establishment of national and subregional programmes and offices;

17. To encourage member States of the Conference that have not done so to pay in full their contributions to the general trust fund of the Conference, and those in a position to do so to contribute to the United Nations Environment Fund;

18. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to ensure that African countries are supported through the development and transfer of appropriate

technology, capacity-building and financial support, in line with and as appropriate to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in order to facilitate the effective implementation of Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and other global decisions, including those of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the former Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme;

19. To also request the Executive Director, member States of the Conference and other partners to support the work of existing centres of excellence and the establishment of new centres and other such facilities, as a means of promoting South-South and triangular cooperation, and to report regularly on progress made in that regard to member States;

20. To further request the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to support the collaborative arrangements between the African Union Commission, the African diplomatic corps and the Conference in Nairobi, the Permanent Representatives' Committee in Addis Ababa, and the African Group of Negotiators in Geneva and in New York to ensure a common understanding of and approach to environmental issues affecting the region, and to facilitate regular interaction among the Addis Ababa, Geneva, Nairobi and New York chapters, building on the strategy that has been developed in that regard;

21. To request the Conference secretariat to communicate with member States through conventional diplomatic channels, including through the permanent missions accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme, on matters related to the Conference.

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